

schools. In the Headmasters' Conference held in 1929, a resolution was passed to the effect that the Provident Fund Scheme should be made compulsory for all English school teachers. But the same had not been put into practice yet. The Government should see that no time was lost in introducing the Scheme in all the schools.

Lastly, the member urged the necessity for paying better attention to the selection of text-books for schools. The books chosen for the various classes should be suitable to the mental attainment of students of the particular classes. This vital point was often lost sight of by persons responsible for the prescription of text-books, to the great suffering of the students.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mrs. Alexander, the general policy of Government at present is to rely on private enterprise, as far as possible, for primary and middle school education in the vernacular; and private schools are freely aided by Government if they are opened according to rules. As you admitted yourself, there is an enormous number of schools, private and departmental. Government do not therefore propose to open any more primary schools or vernacular middle schools except in very rare cases where the locality is backward or not easily accessible, and where the people are prepared to give sites, buildings and furniture free. Government, as I said just now, wish to rely as much as possible on private enterprise.

Nobody can deny the importance of technical education; and I hope this matter will be considered by the Education Reforms Committee which will soon be appointed.

Medical inspection is being done now in all colleges and English schools; and the managers of private schools are being told of the importance of it. Last year, medical inspection was conducted in fourteen private schools. This is a matter which, I think we all agree, must be developed.

Making the Provident Fund Scheme compulsory would mean additional expenditure. If it is applied to all private English schools alone, the annual contribution by Government will come to nearly Rs. 30,000, which, at the present moment, the Government cannot afford. When financial conditions improve the question will be taken up.

The question of improving the method of selecting text-books is now under consideration.

60. Self-governing institutions and their defects.

MR. K. M. KESAVAN TAMPI (*Kalkulam taluk, Group I*) said that the necessity for introducing reforms into the working of self-governing institutions of the State, with a view to make them more useful to the people was urged by him at the 26th session of the Assembly, but the Government did not bestow adequate attention on the subject.

One of the points urged by him at the 26th session was the undesirability of appointing Municipal Councillors as Bench Magistrates. He got a reply from the Government that his suggestion

would be kept in view in making nominations. But shortly after, the member, who was himself a Municipal Councillor, got an order appointing him as a Bench Magistrate and Panchayat Court Judge. Such acts of Government would not only retard the progress of self-governing institutions in the State, but would also make the people unfit for managing them properly.

Another defect in the system of Municipal administration was the election of the Presidents by the Councillors themselves instead of by the ratepayers. This led to a lot of corruption and untoward incidents, as was experienced in connection with the election of a President to the Padmanabhapuram Municipal Council.

Since the transfer of the administration of the municipalities to the people, the Government showed an indifference in making enquiries regarding the defects in their administration. It was essential that a thoroughly experienced and competent person should be appointed as Municipal Commissioner for the whole State to correct the flaws and remedy the defects in the working of the municipalities.

The franchise for municipal elections should be broadened so as to make at least fifty per cent. of the people living within municipal areas eligible to vote. Similarly, women should be made eligible for election as Municipal Councillors as in the case of the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

The system of nominating members from backward communities was not satisfactory. It was the cause of many malpractices, especially on the part of persons aspiring for the Presidentship of the Council. It also enabled undesirable persons, such as those who had criminal convictions, etc., to get into the Council. This system should be stopped and the backward communities should be given permission to elect a member from among themselves.

The practice of constituting the Revising Authority consisting of the Municipal President and two Councillors nominated by the Dewan Peishkar for deciding questions relating to the voters' rights, etc., caused much inconvenience and difficulties. The rule should be modified so that the President, a Judicial Officer of the place and a respectable citizen other than a Councillor, might constitute the Revising Authority.

Lastly, the member suggested that the Judges of the Panchayat Courts and Bench Magistrates should be elected by the local people from among themselves instead of the Government appointing them.

Such a system alone would enable the fittest persons to come in. This innovation would be a step in the right direction.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Kesavan Tampi, it is the rule not to appoint Municipal Councillors as Village Panchayat Court Judges or Bench Magistrates. Your appointment must have been a mistake.

• The draft bill dealing with the Trivandrum Municipality is ready and will soon be introduced in the Legislative Council. The draft of a bill dealing with the mofussil municipalities is being prepared.

61. Village Panchayats.

MR. OUSEPH MANI (*Todupuzha taluk*) requested that Village Panchayats should be established in all the *pakuthies* of the Todupuzha taluk.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Ouseph Mani, five *pakuthies* have been chosen for constituting Village Panchayats under the Village Panchayat Regulation, and provision has been made in this year's budget for contribution to the village funds. The working of these Panchayats will be watched and if they are all right and work well, the question of establishing Village Panchayats in other taluks of the State including the Todupuzha taluk will be considered.

62. Local self-government in Travancore with special reference to the Kottayam Municipal Council.

MR. ABRAHAM JOHN (*Trading Classes, Kottayam*) first spoke about the need for amending the Municipal Regulation, V of 1095. Several Sections of the Regulation required amendment. The sex disqualification attached to women for membership in Municipal Councils should be removed. Provision should be made for passing "no confidence" motions against the Presidents of the Councils. The Municipal Regulation Amendment Bill promised by the Government should be introduced without any further delay.

Certain Municipal Presidents and Municipal Councils disobeyed several directions contained in the Regulation and the bye-laws passed thereunder. Referring to the Kottayam Municipal Council, the member said that the minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of the Council were not properly recorded in the minutes book at the proper time. The resolutions passed at the meetings were not usually read out and confirmed as required by the bye-laws of the Municipality. Applications for construction of buildings were not placed before the Council. The sale deeds in connection with the purchase of land for widening the Baker road and the Eranjal road were not executed in accordance with the provisions contained in Sections 41 to 43 of the Regulation. The illegal and irregular procedure adopted had given rise to many civil and criminal cases in the Kottayam Municipality during the past four years. Nearly Rs. 2,000 had already been spent by the Municipality to defend the civil and criminal cases during a short period of 4 years.

In 1096, taxes under sub-sections 2 to 5 of Section 61 were imposed in the Kottayam Municipality. But no bye-laws had been passed regularising the levy of the above taxes. In the Municipality, persons were assessed according to the whims and fancies of the Municipal executive. The assessment lists of profession and of vehicle taxes were not placed before the Council. Intimation of assessment was not given